

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 03861 222314Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 AID-05
OMB-01 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 JUSE-00 /089 W
-----082285 222318Z /70

O 222132Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9290
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 3861

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, CI
SUBJECT: MORE HUNGER STRIKES BY RELATIVES OF MISSING CHILEANS

1. SUMMARY: SOME SIXTY RELATIVES OF MISSING CHILEANS BEGAN HUNGER STRIKES THE MORNING OF MAY 22 AT THE LOCAL UNICEF OFFICE AND THREE CHURCHES. A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE RELATIVES SAYS THAT ALMOST A YEAR HAS PASSED SINCE THEIR HUNGER STRIKE AT ECLA AND THE GOC HAS NOT CLARIFIED THE STATUS OF THEIR MISSING NEXT OF KIN. THE TIMING ALSO IS RELATED TO THE PRESENCE IN CHILE OF A HIGH-LEVEL AFL-CIO DELEGATION AND RENEWED PUBLIC SPOTLIGHT ON THE LETELIER CASE (THE RELATIVES HAVE REQUESTED ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY PROPPER TO PASS TO THE CHILEAN COURTS ANY INFORMATION HE HAS UNCOVERED, PARTICULARLY FROM TOWNLEY TESTIMONY, WHICH MIGHT RELATE TO THE DISAPPEARANCES). END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO THE HEAD OF THE LOCAL UNICEF OFFICE, THE MORNING OF MAY 22 THREE GROUPS OF THREE PEOPLE EACH APPEARED AT THE SANTIAGO OFFICES ASKING TO SEE DIFFERENT OFFICIALS. ONCE TOGETHER IN THE LIBRARY, THEY DECLARED THEY WOULD NOT LEAVE. UNICEF IS PREPARING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SANTIA 03861 222314Z

A SPACE FOR THEM IN THE BUILDING; SENIOR UN OFFICIAL IN CHILE, ECLA'S DIRECTOR ENRIQUE IGLESIAS, HAS ALREADY BEEN CONSULTED; AND, UN AND GOC OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF THE GROUP'S PRESENCE. WE ARE TOLD CONFIDENTIALLY BY THE LOCAL DIRECTOR THAT AMONG THE SIX WOMEN AND THREE MEN AT LEAST TWO ARE VETERANS OF LAST YEAR'S HUNGER STRIKE AT ECLA. ALL ARE MIDDLE AGED AND APPARENTLY HEALTHY; ONE

IS PREGNANT.

3. AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME, TWENTY OTHERS OCCUPIED THE DON BOSCO CHURCH IN DOWNTOWN SANTIAGO; 18 APPEARED AT THE LA ESTAMPA CHAPEL AND 14 MORE ENTERED THE JESUS OBREO CHAPEL.

4. THE RELATIVES' ORGANIZATION PUT OUT AN ANNOUNCEMENT STATING THAT ALMOST A YEAR HAD ELAPSED SINCE THE GOC AND UN ARRANGED A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT ENDING THE HUNGER STRIKE AT THE ECLA HEADQUARTERS. (AT THAT TIME THE GOC COMMITTED ITSELF TO WORK TO CLARIFY THE CURRENT STATUS OF SOME THIRTY SIX MISSING PEOPLE). THEY POINT OUT THAT THE GOC HAS NOT EXPLAINED WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE DISAPPEARED, RATHER--THEY ASSERT--IT HAS INSTRUCTED THE PRESS NOT TO PUBLISH THEIR MATERIAL AND IT HAS DECLARED AN AMNESTY WHICH THE COURTS ARE USING AS A BASIS FOR CLOSING INQUIRIES INTO PENDING DISAPPEARANCE INVESTIGATIONS (SEE SEPTTEL). THE STATEMENT, WRITTEN IN A MORE STRIDENT THAN USUAL TONE, APPEALS TO DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL OPINION FOR SUPPORT AND DEMANDS EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL CHILEANS--EVEN THOSE WHO BELONG TO PROSCRIBED POLITICAL PARTIES.

5. COMMENT: A PRESS ITEM ON MAY 12 CLAIMED THAT THE VICARIATE OF SOLIDARITY WAS WORKING WITH THE RELATIVES' GROUP AND YOUNG POLITICAL ACTIVISTS TO SET UP A HUNGER
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 SANTIA 03861 222314Z

STRIKE TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH THE AFL-CIO SOLIDARITY VISIT LED BY ILA'S GLEASON. (THE VICARIATE PUBLICLY DENIED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH A PLAN). AND A FEW DAYS AGO A GROUP OF THE RELATIVES ASKED US TO TRANSMIT TO LETELIER/MOFFITT PROSECUTOR PROPPER A LETTER (SIGNED BY 200 RELATIVES) ASKING PROPPER TO GIVE THEM OR CHILEAN COURTS ANY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE DISAPPEARANCES HE HAD UNCOVERED DURING HIS INVESTIGATION--WITH SPECIAL MENTION OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY MICHAEL TOWNLEY.
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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780533/aaaabbjr.tel
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